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SENATE MEMORIAL 19

48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2008

INTRODUCED BY

Timothy Z. Jennings

A MEMORIAL

HONORING THE MEMORY OF SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE BEN D.
ALTAMIRANO.

WHEREAS, the passing of Senator Ben D. Altamirano marks
the loss of a great and devoted public servant; and

WHEREAS, Senator Altamirano was born on October 17, 1930
in Silver City; and

WHEREAS, he was married to his loving wife, Nina
Melendrez, and was father to Yolanda, Ben Jr., and Paul; and

WHEREAS, Senator Altamirano enlisted with the United
States Army in 1946 and served with the European Occupation
Forces during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Senator Altamirano dutifully represented District
28 in the New Mexico Senate from 1971 until his passing in late
2007 and served as president pro tempore from 2005; and

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1 WHEREAS, he served on numerous legislative committees and
2 served as chair of the Senate Finance Committee for seventeen
3 years before being elected president pro tempore, whereupon he
4 became co-chair of the New Mexico Legislative Council; and

5 WHEREAS, during Senator Altamirano's tenure, one hundred
6 eighty-eight members have passed through the senate chambers;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Senator Altamirano played an influential role in
9 the passage of key pieces of legislation, including the ban on
10 cockfighting bill and the minimum wage bill; and

11 WHEREAS, in describing Senator Altamirano's style,
12 Governor Bill Richardson said, "Benny was a true statesman
13 whose soft-spoken demeanor and love for New Mexico helped earn
14 him the respect of everyone who crossed his path.", a sentiment
15 echoed by all who knew him; and

16 WHEREAS, Senator Altamirano was known for his big smile
17 and quick hug; and

18 WHEREAS, Senator Altamirano was also known for his
19 bipartisanship, having been described by Senator Mary Jane M.
20 Garcia as "a kind of peacemaker working with both sides of the
21 aisle";

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
23 OF NEW MEXICO that the memory of Senator Ben D. Altamirano be
24 honored for his many years of devoted service to the people of
25 New Mexico; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the family of Senator Altamirano.

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